Charles C Jones Jr Esq
With regards of J E Ward

27

NARRATIVE

OF THE

AMERICAN EMBASSY TO PEKING,

In July, 1859.

FROM THE JOURNAL OF THE NORTH CHINA BRANCH

OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

VOL. I.—No. III.—ART. VI.

Read before the Society,

Shanghai, October 25th, 1859.

BY S. WELLS WILLIAMS, LL.D.

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NARRATIVE OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY.

The first Embassy from the United States of America to China reached this country in 1844. The Minister, Caleb Cushing, was instructed to proceed to Peking, but on his arrival and announcement of this design, he learned that the Emperor was unwilling to receive foreign embassadors at his capital, and he made no attempt to go there. The treaty which he negotiated was signed at Wanghia, and exchanged at Canton the next year by Commodore Biddle. On the ratification of the treaty of Tientsin at Washington, the newly appointed minister to China, John E. Ward, was instructed to proceed to Peking to deliver an autograph letter from the President to the Emperor, and there effect the exchange of ratifications. In compliance with these instructions, His Excellency arrived in Shanghai on the 28th of May in the steam-frigate *Powhatan.*

The two Imperial Commissioners, Kweiliang and Hwashana, were then at this city, awaiting the arrival of the English and French ministers, with whom they wished to confer on some unsettled points before proceeding to the capital. The treaties negotiated at Tientsin with those two ministers, as well as that with the Russian, stipulated that their ratifications should be exchanged at Peking; but the American treaty mentioned no place where this ceremony must be performed. The time within which it must be done was near at hand, however, and the presence of the Commissioners favored an early arrangement of the preliminaries. It was every way desirable to see them immediately, and at the first meeting it was ascertained that the Emperor intended to exchange ratifications at his capital, and make no distinction between the three Legations; but they added, that as the duties connected with the whole matter devolved on them, there was no need of Mr. Ward being in haste to leave Shanghai for the north. It would require about two months for them to

reach the capital by the land route, and if he arrived in that part of China first he must wait for them.

The policy of the Chinese Government in important crises is to devolve the management of a special mission on one or two of its best servants, and make them responsible for its termination, rather than commit it to officers as part of their ordinary duties. This policy the rulers have found, after long experience, to insure, more than any other which they know, the success of an undertaking. It was exhibited in the present case, and there were many reasons for adhering to it until all the treaties were in operation; but so far as one could see none of those reasons involved the needless delay of going north by the common post routes, and every argument was used by the American minister to convince the Commissioners of the importance of adopting a different course. A passage to Taku in the frigate *Mississippi* was offered them by Commodore Tattnall; but they alleged that until they received permission from the Emperor it would be impossible for them to accept the polite offer. It may be observed that the Chinese do not regard the exchange of the ratifications of a treaty by the day fixed as of paramount importance, nor does an unavoidable postponement in their opinion impair its obligations; they have not yet learned the customs of the West in these particulars.

Arrangements were made for an exchange of visits between the Chinese and the American Plenipotentiaries, which took place on the 2d and 4th of June at Shanghai. At these interviews it was agreed by the former, that as the necessity which lay upon them of meeting the English Minister before they returned to Court would prevent their arrival in Peking in time to exchange the American treaty at that place within the time specified, their failure to do so should have no effect on the validity of the compact. The delay had arisen from causes which they could not control, but they felt satisfied that the Emperor would regard it as immaterial. The fact in respect to the exchange was, that more time must be granted, for the day was only a fortnight hence, and their copy of the treaty was in Peking.

Kweiliang observed, that as the right granted to the American Envoy to go to the capital was derivative, dependent on articles in the treaties with England and France, and on arrangements made in carrying them out, there was a propriety in Mr. Ward going thither at the same time with the envoys of those nations.

He knew that His Majesty desired them all to visit his metropolis, and therefore assured Mr. Ward that he would be received with the same respect that was given to the others, and might proceed north when they went. He and his colleague allowed that every stipulation had been fulfilled by the latter, who had arrived in time to exchange ratifications before the year expired; but their duties in connection with the other treaties prevented their completing this ceremony by the appointed day.

These conditions and arrangements were put in writing by the Commissioners. In their dispatch they explained the reasons of their remaining at Shanghai for so long a period, but said that they would start for the north as soon as the unsettled points were arranged. They alluded to the necessity they were under to go overland; but when the three Ministers reached Peking the exchange of the ratifications of their treaties would at once be made, adding, "In this manner the relations between the several parties to these compacts will be placed on a permanent and amicable footing, and all their provisions carried out to the common advantage of all." In his reply, Mr. Ward took the precaution to repeat what he had already mentioned, and stated that as he had formally proffered them the President's ratification within the stipulated time, he regarded the exchange as having been made *de jure*, and that all rights dependent thereon accrued from that date.

Two days after these arrangements had been completed, their Excellencies, the English and French Plenipotentiaries, reached Shanghai on the 6th of June. The sequel of their negotiations with the Chinese Commissioners was briefly referred to by the latter in a communication to Mr. Ward, dated the 11th, in which they told him that the Allied Ministers could not remain longer in Shanghai, "because the time for exchanging their treaties is so near at hand;" and as they themselves were therefore to leave for Peking on the 13th with their retinues, Mr. Ward could do so when he pleased.

The impression which was left on the minds of those who heard the remarks of Kweiliang and Hwashana in relation to these proposed visits, and their own connection with their objects, was very strong that they were sincere in their hopes and plans to bring this perplexing and difficult mission to a prosperous conclusion. It is much to be regretted that they

would not venture on the responsibility of violating the etiquette of their posts, and go by one of the steamers at their service; their declinature, with all the information they possessed, shows what they thought they would incur by such a step. With the fate of Kiying before them, who can wonder? Still more deplorable is it that they did not state at least what they knew of the defenses at Taku, and the arrangements made to receive the foreign Ministers at Pehtáng. Their only observation to the American Legation on this point, was "that the *Toeywan* would not be allowed to go up to Tientsin." No one is perhaps able to define the degree of their responsibility, and determine their knowledge of the latter particulars, for all who are acquainted with the statecraft of this people, are aware of the reticence of its functionaries, and also of their unwillingness to interfere with the proceedings of others over whom their direct authority does not extend. In judging these points, some allowance may be made for persons exposed to the caprices of a despot, and the intrigues of rivals.

Mr. Ward left Wusung with his suite in the *Powhatan*, the flag-ship of Commodore Tattnall, having the chartered steam-tender *Toeywan* in company, and reached the mouth of the Pei-ho on the 21st of June. The English and French Ministers were already there, and a fleet of 17 steamers under the command of Admiral Hope; which, with the French frigate *Duchayla* and tender *Norzagaray*, made in all 21 steamers at anchor outside of the Bar. It was reported that the forts had been rebuilt since last year on better principles of fortification, and three or four lines of iron stakes and heavy timber booms laid across the channel. The Admiral had already told the Chinese at the forts the purpose of his arrival, and desired them to open a passage through the abattis for his vessels, that the British Minister might go to Tientsin. This they had declined to do.

The tide did not allow the dispatch-boats and tenders to cross the Bar till the 24th, by which day, fourteen of them, including the *Norzagaray* and *Toeywan*, were anchored inside. The latter, having on board Mr. Ward and the Commodore, proceeded beyond the others, with the intention of approaching as near to the fort as the stakes would permit. In doing so she took the ground, and though Admiral Hope most kindly sent the gun-boat *Plover* to assist in getting her off, she remained there under the batteries until the tide floated her at sunset.

While in this position, a party of five was sent in the barge to land at the first jetty which led from the southern water-gate to the river's edge. It was above the first boom of iron stakes, and a similar causey further up afforded additional facilities for entering the fort. On approaching the first jetty, three or four men came down to meet the boat, followed by half a dozen others armed with spears and swords, who remained a few rods behind; all were dressed in common blue clothes with turbans. The first party represented themselves as belonging to a company of volunteer braves, which had been placed in the forts to destroy pirates, and prevent men-of-war going up the river; and their orders were to fire upon whoever attempted the passage. The spokesman of the company, a gigantic fellow, assured us that he knew that the Emperor had issued orders to conduct the foreign Ministers to Peking; and furthermore, he had heard that Hang-fuh, the Governor-general of the province, had that day arrived from Páuting, and had gone on to Pehtáng, a town a few miles on the coast north of the present entrance. He was asked to send Mr. Ward's card over to this place, which was unknown to all of us, but declined to do so on the ground that it would be presumption on his part; neither could he furnish a carriage or a sedan to take a messenger there, nor a pilot to guide the steamer to the mouth of the river. These things did not pertain to him, but he had no doubt we could easily find the town ourselves, for the masts visible across the intervening land were those of junks lying in the river near it. There was a confidence in the bearing of this man and his comrades, which made us suspect that they were assuming their present character, — a suspicion which the unusual quiet rather confirmed.

While talking with him, three or four others were seen in the gateway, and perhaps a dozen more on the upper jetty, with as many half dressed boatmen loitering about their scows. No flags were flying from this or the other forts, nor were any men to be seen on the parapet of the nearest. The mats which hung over its port-holes prevented observations within. Small iron caltrops were scattered along the water's edge, and near the wall ran a wide ditch, whose outlet at the jetty was deep. The chief speaker would give no information respecting the force within the forts, but he assured us that no harm would be done to the *Toeywan* if no attempt was made to remove the booms. This information,

meagre as it was, was communicated to the Admiral, who had already decided to open a passage up the river.

That night and the next day the attempt was made, which brought on the battle; but the tender received no injury during it. She went out of the river on the 26th, towing two boats of wounded men to their ships, and returned the next day to assist further as might be needed. She was therefore not ready to proceed to the town of Pehtáng until Wednesday, when she was dispatched with a letter for the Governor-general. The coast in this direction is so low that the entrance cannot easily be distinguished; and Captain Semmes did not feel safe in running very close in, as no survey had been made. A boat was sent towards a village near which three junks lay; but on reaching them, they were found empty, and it proceeded ashore. The inhabitants fled at its approach, but when the three gentlemen from it reached the village, a few of them returned, and said, that fearing an attack, and not knowing the American flag, which they had never before seen, they had all fled into the country, at the same time sending a messenger to the encampment to obtain protection against the invaders. The two parties were becoming acquainted, when one of the villagers exclaimed, "The horsemen are coming! You had better run to your boat!" Another of them willingly accepted the letter to take it to Pehtáng, and the three gentlemen hastened back across the uncovered beach to the boat, which they reached just as some troopers appeared over the bank. A note was received the next day from Sun, the Intendant of the Tientsin Circuit, who confirmed the report made by the soldiers at Taku respecting the intended reception of the three Embassies at Pehtáng; he informed us that the Governor-general was then at Tientsin, but that the letter would be immediately forwarded to him, and an answer sent as soon as possible.

This note was answered on the 2d in Mr. Ward's name, and the 5th of July proposed as the day of meeting His Excellency; but through the delay of his clumsy junks, his answer did not reach the ship until the evening of that day. It was couched in civil terms, expressed his intention to carry His Majesty's orders into effect, and to do everything to facilitate the journey of the American Embassy to Peking. He also added that he had been directed to prepare an escort for the English and French Embassies, but his communication to the Hon. Mr. Bruce had been declined on the

25th, on the ground "that orders had already been given to the men-of-war to commence the battle." He expressed his "wonder and alarm" on hearing this, for he "supposed that the real intention of the English Plenipotentiary was merely to proceed to Peking to exchange the treaty;" and assured Mr. Ward "that the works at Taku were merely erected to defend the locality, and with no sinister design whatever — if the English minister wished to go to the capital that way, therefore, a full discussion upon the matter should have been held with him before attempting it."

It appears suitable to the unexpected turn of affairs, and the suspicions which the battle of the 25th would naturally cause in the minds of the Chinese with regard to the intentions of all those whose flags had been seen there, to quote the sentiments of this dispatch; for it would seem from its tenor that the letters from Shanghai sent by Kweiliang on the 11th had not been received, and that Hangfuh had come from Páuting on hearing of Admiral Hope's arrival in the Gulf. Steam had probably been too quick for the posts and the circumlocution-office.

The first appointment having failed, another was made for the 8th; and Hangfuh's reply was received in full time to move the frigate towards Pehtáng. On that day, Mr. Ward and Commodore Tattnall, accompanied by a small party, proceeded in the tender to the entrance of the river, under the guidance of a pilot. The land could not be seen from the frigate, but two forts furnished a waymark to the entrance; and when within half a league, the party met the three junks sent to receive them. These vessels had been carefully fitted up for the occasion, and in one of them the foreigners proceeded to the landing, which was likewise ornamented with silk festoons. An immense crowd lined the banks, the boats, and the streets. We proceeded in carriages to the place of meeting between files of muskeeters, spearmen and bowmen, and to do further honor to the occasion, a long line of cavalry had also been drawn out on the opposite bank, all in uniform. Though the equipage of these vehicles, and the discipline and apparel of these soldiers were not quite equal to those in the West, there was all the evidence of respect in the arrangements that the most fastidious person could have desired.

A large concourse of officers was assembled, among whom were several we had known last year; one of them was the mercurial Pien, the sub-prefect of Tsáng-chau, as bustling as ever. The

red covered tables, piled up with saucers of fruits and sweetmeats, and plates of cold viands, with the chairs and other things around them, were set out so exactly like those I had left standing at Taku in May last year the day before the battle, that it seemed as if all had just been moved over to this room. The principal personages having been seated, the Governor-general led the conversation, and in the most quiet manner, inquired of Mr. Ward what he had come for and when he arrived; and as if this information was new to him, proceeded to ask, "Have you heard that there has been a conflict at Taku with the English?" This question being answered, the next was, "Then you have heard people speak of it?" He then, after a few observations, went on to say, that as the Imperial Commissioners had not yet arrived in Peking, and the treaty could not be exchanged until they came, he wished to know where the Minister preferred to wait until that time, and then voluntarily offered to obtain the necessary orders for him to remain meanwhile in Peking as he desired, for he had no doubt of Kweiliang's arrival within the month. During the meeting, he introduced a stout officer, who, the moment he began to speak, was recognized as the chief speaker on the jetty at Taku, and was brought forward to explain that he had there given correct information in all that he had stated. The impression left after this interview was that the provincial officers were somewhat embarrassed, now that they found the American Minister still desirous to proceed, and made this excuse to obtain definite directions respecting the intentions of their Government, in order not to implicate themselves.

The town of Pehtáng (北塘 *i.e.* Northern Embankment,) gives its name to the river which flows north of it, a stream in size and appearance similar to the Pei-ho or White River. It lies on the coast five or six miles above Taku, in the Eastern Circuit of the metropolitan prefecture of Shuntien, and in the district of Ningho, a town about twenty miles up the river. Judging from the scores of junks at its jetties, and the docks for building them, it possesses a large trade. The population is reckoned to be over 30,000, including the people of a few hamlets thereabouts. They mostly dwell in houses made of the soil, a tenacious mud that needs to be strengthened with millet stalks when made into walls. Whether from the saltness of the soil or other causes, almost no grass or grain, trees, or anything green, are seen near the place.

On the 16th a dispatch was received from the Governor-general, stating that he had been "honored with His Majesty's commands, permitting the American Envoy to leave for the capital any day he pleased after the 19th of July, there to await the arrival of the Imperial Commissioners, with whom the ratifications of the treaty would be exchanged." He informed Mr. Ward that he had appointed Tsunghau, a Manchu civilian, holding the office of superintendent of transportation and a brevet commissioner of the gabelle, with Chang Pingtoh, a Chinese colonel in the army with brevet rank of general, to be his escort. Associated with them was Li, a sub-prefect, and others still lower in rank, in all amounting to nearly twenty officials above the 7th grade.

Mr. Ward accordingly appointed the 20th July as the day for starting, and mentioned that the number of his party would be twenty persons. Commodore Tattnall at first intended to go, but his health compelled him to decline the journey. The preparations for departure were made, and the Minister and his suite left the *Powhatan* on Tuesday, the 19th, to proceed into the river. At his departure from the anchorage he was saluted by the two Russian steamers then there, and His Excellency General Mouravieff, the Governor-general of Eastern Siberia, came on board the tender to take leave and hand him a letter for General Ignatieff, the Russian minister at Peking.

The persons composing the Embassy were as follows:—

His Excellency JOHN E. WARD, } *Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary.*

Dr. S. WELLS WILLIAMS, }
W. WALLACE WARD, Esq., } *Secretaries to the Legation.*

Rev. W. A. P. MARTIN, }
Rev. WM. AITCHISON, } *Assistant Interpreters.*

Lieut. S. D. TRENCHARD, *Flag lieut. of Com. Tattnall.*
JOHN L. FOX, *Surgeon.*
B. F. GALLAHER, *Purser.*
Lieut. ALEX. W. HABERSHAM.
WILLIAM H. SHOCK, *Chief Engineer.*
ALGERNON S. TAYLOR, *Captain of Marines.*
Rev. HENRY WOOD, *Chaplain.*
JOHN W. SANDFORD Jr., *Assistant Surgeon.*

GEORGE W. HEARD, Esq., }
JOHN L. LURMAN, Esq., } *Attachés.*

JOHN ALLMAND, *Secretary to Com. Tattnall.*
Three Marines and servant, with ten natives.

The company landed the next morning, and were received by the escort, which had provided carriages to convey them across the country. These vehicles are drawn by one horse, or driven tandem; they are covered with canvas and oiled cloth, and both the horse and driver are protected by an awning. The body is destitute of springs, but the principal inconvenience to a foreigner is the want of seats; the passenger is usually expected to fit it with cushions, and arrange the inside as he pleases. An application had been made for bearers to carry two sedans, and they could doubtless have been obtained by waiting for them to arrive; but a few hours' experience of the road vindicated the reasonable objections of the Chinese to that mode of transportation over this muddy plain, for the coolies would soon have been knocked up.

On getting out of Pehtáng, the cortegé proceeded nearly due west across the plain, whose continuity stretched in an unbroken level as far as could be seen, relieved only by a few conical graves near the town; not a house or a hillock was in sight, and it was not till near Kiun-liáng-ching 軍糧城 16 miles distant, that the soil repaid cultivation, or was even generally covered with other than saline plants. The provincial treasurer, Wanhiuh, met Mr. Ward at this place, and begged him to remain till morning, as the next stopping-place was less commodious. A large house had been prepared for our accommodation, which exhibited in its general appearance such a superiority to the mud hovels in which most of the villagers lived, that no further proof was needed of the general poverty of the population in this region.

The company moved on at an early hour next morning, and arrived in the afternoon at the village of Peh-tsáng 北倉 on the Pei-ho, about ten miles above Tientsin by the river, wearied out by hot ride of thirty miles across the same unbroken plain, much of the way through miry roads and across half deluged fields. The country was covered with good crops of millet, sorghum, maize, beans, Chinese yam, hemp *(Sida)*, sesamum, melons and other vegetables, but fruit and other trees were scanty. Twelve villages were passed, and twice that number seen during the day, at one of which called Sí-tí-tau 西提頭, on a canal crossing the country between the two rivers, we rested for two hours.

Five boats of different sizes had been provided at Pehtsáng for

the Embassy, in which the gentlemen found good accommodation. The escort occupied as many more. The whole flotilla started early on the 22d, and reached Tung-chau on the evening of the 27th, drawn by trackers the entire distance of more than 300 li. The people living near the Pei-ho thronged the landings to see the "far-traveled strangers," their curiosity stimulated no doubt by the report of the late occurrences. The population along the river near Tung-chau is less than above Tientsin, but the banks are everywhere equally well cultivated. Yangtsun 楊村 is the largest town between these two cities, reported to contain upwards of a hundred thousand people.

The city of Tung-chau 通州 lies at the head of navigation; two tributaries flow into the Pei-ho near it, and goods intended for the capital are landed here. The boats extended for about three miles in a nearly unbroken mass, besides other long rows of grain junks anchored below the town, the whole forming a very busy and curious scene. The pagoda of Tung-chau, the only one met coming from the coast, is a conspicuous object, but the city itself does not appear to advantage from the river. It contains about 400,000 inhabitants, and is rather better built than Tientsin.

Carriages were here provided to convey us to Peking next morning, but the stone road leading there was so broken up, that after a short trial we preferred to ride on horseback or walk. The escort used the same vehicles themselves, and so do the people generally; in fact, we only saw one sedan chair, carrying an officer's wife at the time, during the whole journey, and made no attempt to get them after leaving Pehtáng. The travel upon this road is so great, and the soil so soft, that constant care would be necessary to keep it in order; while no repairs seem to have been made since Sir Henry Ellis took his night ride in August, 1816, which he describes in such moving terms. When last laid by Kienlung, it was an approach to the capital worthy of that monarch. The country on either side was well cultivated indeed, but the fields and farmsteads, the mausolea, the public pavilions, and the temples occurring on the way, exhibited the same features of neglect. At the northern end the road is bordered with well built shops for more than half a mile, quite up to the *Cháu-yáng Mun*, or Morning Sun Gate; their size and gilding present a remarkable contrast to the mean shops in the continuation of the same avenue within the gate. Several fine honorary

gateways added to the gay appearance of the row, but the wretched road took away all appreciation of their elegance.

The wall of the city near this gate is in good order, rising about sixty feet, and the five storied guardhouse over it nearly forty more; they presented altogether an imposing appearance; not a man was seen in or upon them, nor any cannon. The avenue within is over a hundred feet wide and unpaved, and the centre of it in consequence of the recent rain, was now a quagmire, through which horses, carriages, and drivers floundered in great confusion. The scene was disappointing to all who had entertained high expectations of the glory of the metropolis of China; yet the vast crowds of men, women, and children quietly standing in dense multitudes in front of the houses, and lining the sides of the carriage way in an unbroken row, most of them well dressed in white or blue garments, together with the yellow-tiled temples, honorary gateways, and shops ornamented with pillars and fancy signboards, rendered it an interesting and animated sight. The house prepared for the Embassy was situated in the Old or Manchu portion of the city, about half a league from the gate, in Thirteenth Street, and the neighborhood of Lau-kiun-táng. These quarters formerly belonged to the prime minister, Saishanga, and were confiscated on his disgrace in 1852. They contained altogether nineteen rooms with intervening court-yards; the buildings were of one storey, and the apartments plainly furnished. It was reported that the quarters fitted up for the English and French Legations were other palaces which had also belonged to this grandee.

The next day the Imperial Commissioners, who had reached the city on the 20th, were informed that the American Minister had arrived and was ready to confer with them. It was deemed by Mr. Ward to be only a suitable mark of respect to the Chinese Government, that until he had seen the Commissioners, the members of his suite should not go abroad. The letters for the Russian Legation were sent, and an acknowledgment received from them the same evening.

On Friday morning, Sieh, the provincial Judge of Kiángsú, came to confer respecting the meeting with Kweiliang, and to speak of the presentation to the Emperor. This man, while holding the office of Intendant at Shanghai, had been brought into contact with foreigners and had now been associated with the Commis-

sioners on account of his experience; he had come to Peking as their secretary in the expected conferences with foreign ministers. He is a man of talents and craft, and the effect of the late victory was apparent in his altered bearing. At this visit he wished to learn so much of our views as would give his Government an idea of the course to pursue, but was referred to the plenipotentiaries themselves, who were to meet on the morrow; they would discuss every point, and their subordinates could come to no conclusion.

The Judge however stated, that in consequence of the part taken by the *Toeywan* on the 25th ult., the Emperor was in some doubt respecting the sincerity of the peaceful professions of the Americans; and their movements on that day gave force to the hostile expressions used last year in one of Mr. Reed's dispatches, in which he spoke of being forced to join the Allies. The remark furnished an opportunity to tell him what was done by the Commodore on that day, and exhibit the serious consequences which had, and might still, arise to his own country from its neglect in preparing for the reception of the foreign ministers on the coast. The impression had got abroad among the people, he assured us, that the Americans landed their own men from the boats towed up by the *Toeywan*, derived chiefly from the assertion of one of the English prisoners, who said that he was an American, and had landed from those boats. It is not surprising that such an idea had obtained credence, though its existence was now first learned, and the opportunity was improved to state the reason of the tender being there, and assure Sieh that, though she had towed boats in and out, she had not landed a man nor fired a gun.

About 11 o'clock the next day, Mr. Ward, attended by three of his suite, repaired on horseback to the Kiá-hing sz' near the northwest corner of the *Hwáng-ching* or Imperial Citadel, which surrounds the walled inclosure called the Forbidden City, in which the Imperial family lives. He was there met by the Commissioners, attended by about a hundred officials of every shade of button, all dressed in their easy summer costume; but none of them in full embroidery. The contrast between this meeting in the capital of China, where not a soldier, nor an implement of war was seen, nor even a musician, to the military parade which is common in European capitals and courts on such occasions, illustrated the different usages in the governments at the East and West of this vast continent in these particulars.

The Commissioners themselves were as courteous as usual, and Kweiliang in better health than when at Shanghai.

He opened the conversation by a full expression of his feelings at the recent occurrences at Taku, and at having been refused an interview at Shanghai by the English and French Ministers. He was, of course, not interrupted in whatever he wished to say, but judging from his energetic, and almost bitter manner of expression, it seemed as if he felt that some vindication of his own policy was required under the circumstances. He was now in the presence of his fellow courtiers, many of whom were opposed to his policy, and watching for his fall; and from the free and unusual conduct of some of them, we inferred that they were persons of far higher position, even perhaps of the Imperial household, than their insignia indicated — an inference which was afterwards confirmed. It was not surprising that individuals about the palace should desire to be present at the interview, after what had so recently transpired almost within their hearing. Regret at the sudden disappointment of his plans and hopes may have had its weight in the mind of Kweiliang; and as he now anxiously looked forward to the further development of events, he may have felt that he had done what he could to bring about a peaceful solution of difficulties. So far as my own feelings went, they were those of sincere regret at the position of these officers, and a strong belief that they would have been able to have given all the treaties full effect if their arrangements had not been unexpectedly frustrated.

It was sometime before the Commissioners were ready to enter upon the principal object of the interview. They said that the Emperor wished to do honor to the American Minister, now that he had reached his capital, not alone to exhibit his friendly feeling to him personally, but to prove the respect he felt for the President; and therefore they had now only to discuss the mode and time for an audience. In speaking of the President, they used the terms *Ta Hwang-ti,* 大皇帝 or August Emperor, and *kiun-chú* 君主 or princely ruler; they have also learned the word *President,* but it is an awkward combination of unmeaning syllables in Chinese, and they seldom employed it.

These are great changes from former usages, and in order to explain them, it will be well to refer briefly to the views entertained

by the Chinese respecting the position of their sovereign. They suppose that all the human race has been placed under the authority of one head by superior Powers. These Powers, included under the comprehensive names of *Tien* and *Tí*, or Heaven and Earth, have delegated the direct control of mankind to the One Man, who was and always has been the Emperor of China; it is he alone who makes with Heaven and Earth, the Trinity of Powers, *Tien, Tí, Jin, i.e.* Heaven, Earth and Man. The Emperor of China has the position, therefore, of the Vicegerent or co-ordinate of Heaven, and it is a solecism in the mind of every true subject of his throne to suppose or admit of a second Ta Hwángti. The claim to this title has in fact been waived since the earliest times by nearly all other Asiatic sovereigns in favor of the Chinese. Rémusat observes, that all the ambitious conquerors who have arisen on the continent have regarded their full title to be *the* Sovereign Monarch of the race as incomplete until they had obtained the throne of China. The Chinese now are beginning to learn differently; and the terms used on this day for the chief ruler of a friendly and independent power evinced the progress of the change.

Still, whatever terms the Commissioners might use to denote the entire equality of the President with their Emperor, his Representative only was now in Peking, and in their view an audience with the sovereign was indispensible, before the treaty could be exchanged. They agreed that the United States was totally unlike Annam, Corea, Lewchew, or Siam, whose envoys brought tribute to court, who made the same prostrations, consisting of three kneelings and nine knockings, which were performed by native officials, and who were honored by presents after the ceremony. The American Embassador had brought no tribute, and would not be asked to perform the usual rite; "but," interposed Judge Sieh, who was seated with the Commissioners, "once kneeling and thrice knocking will do for a friendly power." This remark was not taken up by them, however, nor ever alluded to again as a compromise; the *proper kotau*, a rite which implies knocking the head on the ground either once or thrice, was never required of Mr. Ward as a condition of his audience. It is a confusion of terms and ideas to represent the issue that was made as being dependent on this act, and prevents our understanding how much the Chinese really conceded.

Before they began to describe what mode of approach would be admissible, Mr. Ward deemed it better to state explicitly what his own views were on this subject, which now began to assume an importance it had not before taken; for the Commissioners had not hinted at an audience in Shanghai, taking it for granted no doubt, that it was a sequence of a visit to the capital. He assured them of the great respect he felt for His Majesty, in which he knew he likewise expressed the sincere sentiments of the President, who indeed had made them known in the letter of which he was the bearer. He had now come to the capital to deliver that letter, and to exchange the treaty; and he would regard an audience with the Emperor as a mark of high favor to himself, and respect to his country. But important at the present juncture as a reception at court would be to China herself, he could not kneel when he came before the Throne, for he never saluted his own ruler in that manner, nor did the representatives of the United States kneel when they came into the presence of any sovereign on the earth. To kneel was, in his view, entirely a religious act, and he did so only in the presence of God. The treaty itself made no mention of an audience, he himself had not asked it; and now that they had spoken of it he wished to state what his views on the point were, remarking that in other particulars he was ready to conform to the etiquette of the Chinese Court when they were made known to him.

Hwashana here observed, "Our rulers are equal, and so are we all as their ministers; now, as we kneel before the Emperor, if you do not, we become unequal, for you are then raised above us." To this clever turn on the part of this minister, it was explained by Mr. Ward that their positions were entirely different from his. Hwashana was a subject of the Emperor and must obey his orders and observe his ritual; but Mr. Ward was the representative of another country, whose dignity he could not compromise by such a compliance. Besides, in the treaty made with Lord Elgin it was stated, that at an audience nothing should be required of the English Minister which was derogatory to the honor of other countries, and which was not accorded by ministers at other courts; and though Kweiliang had declared that this treaty was now null, these stipulations at least expressed the sentiments he held last year. Furthermore, they themselves must feel that if the respect paid to a person was not voluntary, it was merely

hypocritical; and in performing the salutation of bowing, he (Mr. Ward) exhibited all the respect he felt for his President, which they would readily acknowledge was quite as great as he could possibly feel for their Emperor.

The Chinese were asked if they would willingly degrade their country abroad by doing anything derogatory to its honor, or in violation of their conscience. This was a contingency easy to answer, for with them conscience did not oppose these prostrations, and the probabilities of their going abroad were uncertain and remote; but we were hardly prepared to hear Kweiliang say that he would perform the *kotau*, and do whatever was required of him at an audience in Washington, he would even burn incense before the President if asked to do so. A stronger testimonial to the religious character of the homage rendered to the Emperor by his subjects could hardly be required; but it was further strengthened by the judge adding, "If we do not kneel before the Emperor, we do not show him any respect; it is that or nothing, and is the same reverence that we pay to the gods."

They then went on to observe that he would regard it as an indignity for an embassy from a friendly nation to visit his capital, and the Envoy not see him, when he required too so much less of him than he did of his own courtiers; and the President would be offended with him for not showing his representative due respect. In some European courts, even in the English, persons knelt before the monarch when presented to him, and it would be no more derogatory to do so here than there. "You are a Plenipotentiary," interposed Hwashana, turning to Mr. Ward; "you have full powers, and can certainly do such an act."

"I am not invested with powers sufficient to enable me to change the laws and usages of my country, and can do nothing to degrade it," was the reply. The full force of this remark will be better understood, however, when it is explained that the term used by the Chinese for *plenipontentiary* might also be rendered *all-mighty* or *completely powerful*. The Chinese now desired that further discussion might be postponed to the next interview, so that both parties could reflect on the subject. This would give them time to consult again with the Cabinet.

They now proposed to adjourn to the next room, where a sumptuous repast had been spread partly in foreign style, with table-cloth, knives, silver forks, and napkins, which was quite

unexpected, as an incidental evidence of the preparations which had been made to entertain the foreigners in Peking. While at table, Mr. Ward requested that horses might be sent to the Legation, for members of his suite to take exercise; but Kweiliang replied, that as soon as the audience had taken place, everything in the city and suburbs would be shown them with the utmost pleasure. It is well known that the usage of the Chinese in relation to foreign embassies, is that their first duties are with the court, and this practice of not publicly honoring them until afterwards, was referred to in a letter from the Russian Minister.

The day of this interview was very hot, and the fatigue of the visit was increased by the cloud of fine dust, which rested over the whole city like a lurid pall, covering everything. The streets through which we passed were all unpaved, and the buildings exhibited a dilapidated, neglected aspect, relieved only now and then by a newly gilded shop front or a clean white wall. In pleasing contrast to the decay and dirt, many magnificent locusts and other trees towered above the buildings, and gave a rural, cheerful look to the scene, while they lessened the heat and dust. The large pond or lake north of the *Hwáng-ching* is overgrown and neglected, presenting a melancholy contrast to its original beauty and capabilities as described by former travelers. The yellow tiled brick wall around the Hwáng-ching is in good condition, and the interior is said by the Russians to be well kept.

This visit was returned on Tuesday, August 2d, at the house of the Legation, by the Commissioners, who came in the same sort of carriages that had been furnished the Embassy on its journey. There was no military escort, and no parade in the dress or number of attendants upon the Prime Minister; it was a plain visit, characteristic of the little display usually seen among high Chinese officers, and so far as is known was the first one made by the Prime Minister within the capital upon a Western embassador.

The subject of the audience was immediately brought forward, and much of the same ground again discussed. The principal point insisted on to-day was that kneeling was practiced at some European courts, — certainly it was at the English; and therefore, as Mr. Ward had agreed to do at Peking whatever he would do at any of those courts, he was bound to kneel at the Chinese. The usage observed at Rome was also referred to, and brought on some explanations respecting the similarity in the religious sense given

to the kneeling before the Emperor and that before the Pope. Hwashana asked if he was not a *hiáu wáng*, or king of religion, and this homage paid him by those of the same faith. It was shown to both the Commissioners that they were mistaken in their facts and inferences; for at the English court even subjects did not always kneel when they came into the presence of their Sovereign, but only when they received the honor of knighthood, or on some other special occasion; and no foreign ministers, American, English, or any other, ever kneeled to the Queen or the Pope; those two rulers had not demanded it, no envoy had accorded it, and it could not be performed in Peking.

In order to bring the discussion to a point, they requested to have the ceremony Mr. Ward was willing to perform described in a communication to be sent to them, but the draft of what he presented before they left was declined as being too explicit. In it he agreed to bow very low before the Emperor, more than once if he wished; to stand uncovered, and not to turn his back while in his presence; but he would not kneel or make the *kotau*. Instead of the word *bow* used in the draft, they wished to insert the phrase "bend the right knee slightly, and still stand;" but after what they had said respecting the religious nature of the ceremony, this was inadmissible. They concluded this conference, after it had continued five hours, by saying that they must report to His Majesty that the customs of the two countries were so unlike, it was better that no audience took place, much as he desired to do honor to the American nation in its representative. They had conducted their argument with patience and candor, and exhausted every fact and reason they had for its support; but to the last they were evidently unsatisfied in respect to the real practices at European courts. They felt that the debate was an important one, and the precedent now given could never be exceeded on future occasions; they were ready to give up their claims to supremacy over foreign ministers, but were unwilling to concede an audience to them with less than was required by European sovereigns.

It was agreed at this time, on Mr. Ward's proposal, that the business which had brought the Legation to the capital should be finished so that it could return to Pehtáng on the 11th; and the Commissioners disclaimed all restraint upon its movements. They said they had placed policemen in that neighborhood to restrain

the crowd which would otherwise throng; but there was no possible reason for preventing a few peaceable foreigners from going where they pleased. They were apparently apprehensive, however, of some untoward collusion between us and the Russians, if free intercourse was allowed; both from the many questions the Judge had asked about the dispatches we had sent to them, and from their detention for six days of the answers which came in this evening from General Ignatieff. The facts regarding this question of circulation about the city are more satisfactorily explained by a reference to the ideas entertained by the Chinese respecting the dignity of an embassy, that its members should not concern themselves about the trivialties of trade, at least until its public business is over, or the chief has had his audience. Foreign ministers and legations have in earlier times demeaned themselves in the opinion of the Chinese, by living with merchants, or like the former E. I. Company's chiefs at Canton, by engaging in trade.

It was now supposed that nothing more remained to be done but exchange the treaty. The Chinese dignitaries were obliged to go twelve miles to the summer palace of Yuen-ming Yuen to report to the Emperor, who was sojourning there during the hot weather, and no answer was expected till the 4th; but the next morning the Judge unexpectedly appeared with disturbed countenance. He had just come into the city with a plan of compromise which they all thought would succeed. This was that the Commissioners should address Mr. Ward a letter stating that, as the Emperor had decided to grant him an audience, it was necessary beforehand that he should state to them what form of obeisance he would make in coming before the Throne, and they would then make the necessary arrangements. He need only reply to this, that when he delivered the President's letter to His Majesty, he would render him every mark of respectful deference which he did to the President, without addition or diminution.

On being furnished with a draft of the reply, the Judge said it was perfectly satisfactory, though it did not cover the undecided point of kneeling at European courts. He then remarked that the audience would probably take place on the following Monday (the 8th), and in the most confident and cheerful manner, went through the details of the audience and presentation of the letter as if he had no doubt of their occurrence. The particular compromise which had been contrived between the requirements

of Chinese court ceremonial, and the obduracy of republican independence, consisted in placing the table, on which the President's letter was to be laid, before the throne in such a manner that its embroidered cover would conceal most of the person of the Minister. As he approached it, he should then bow as low as he had already proposed, and a chamberlain would approach on either side as if to raise him up, crying out, "Don't kneel!" Those of his suite presented with him would then go through the same ceremony, after which, he would respectfully present the letter by placing it on the table, from whence it would be taken by another courtier, who on his knees would hand it to the Emperor. In this singular manner was the character of the Sovereign to be saved, in the eyes of his officers, by the Embassador being restrained, as it were, from completing a prostration which was not intended to take place.

This unexpected concession of the whole point was supposed to be chiefly due to the personal wish of the Emperor to see the foreigners himself, coöperating with the well known desire of Kweiliang and Hwashana for the audience on political grounds; and when Sieh left the house of Legation, with the drafts of the two papers to be submitted to the Privy Council, he seemed to have no doubt that the matter would be satisfactorily arranged.

The arrival of Kweiliang's dispatch was accordingly anxiously looked for, but instead of it the Judge himself returned next day more dispirited than ever to inform us of another turn of affairs, and that his motion had been outvoted. How much hand he had in the matter himself, to get fame and promotion by his skillful diplomacy of a delicate question, is a point which admits some discussion. I am disposed to think his sense of the desirableness of arranging an audience at any rate led him to throw his influence in its favor; but his ill concealed superciliousness rendered him a disagreeable man in a conference, a trait the more observable from its not being common among Chinese officials. His Majesty's decision now was that, unless Mr. Ward would either actually touch one knee, or the end of his fingers, on the ground, he would not admit him to Court. Of course this was refused, and the question of an audience finally decided in the negative.

It had been discussed five days in every possible light, and during all their remarks the Chinese Commissioners had never trespassed the bounds of strict politeness; much less had they even

referred to the helpless condition of twenty foreigners in their capital as a reason for complying with a ceremony in their eyes so liberal and unobjectionable — a form which they could not perform before their sovereign, but might be called on a dozen times in a day to make when saluting their friends. The antiforeign ministers at court were probably strong enough to prevent an audience with the performance of a mere bow, now that their party had a powerful argument against an extension of intercourse in the late proceedings; and this sudden turn, of concession one day and refusal the next, confirms this supposition; while the whole debate supports my own opinion that if the representatives of Great Britain and France had been in the capital, all would have been admitted at the Chinese court in the same manner as at their own. It is unfair to the Chinese to take up the impression that they were insincere or dogmatic in all their assertions. They had strong reasons for desiring an audience, but in their position erroneous ideas might easily be firmly believed, especially on such a point as the usages of kneeling at the court of St. James' when receiving the accolade. Mr. Ward and his brother had both been recently received at the Tuileries, and the usages of an audience there were described to them. We knew that Lord Amherst had agreed in 1816 to kneel before the Emperor as he did before the King, and that Macartney had done it; we were aware, too, that Russian envoys had made kotau; but neither side referred to those instances.*

The next dispatch from Kweiliang indicated his unpleasant hesitation. His view required, as the necessary sequence of the arrival of an embassy at Peking, that its chief should see the Emperor and deliver his letter of credence; but that chief had, in the present instance, "firmly maintained his own opinion when consulting upon the ceremonies to be observed at an audience;" and — jumping to his inference — he then says, "we are quite at a loss, therefore, to understand for what purpose your Excellency has come to Peking;" and concludes with the dilemma, that, "As the treaty of Tientsin must be exchanged somewhere, where is it to be?" The Minister was at the capital, and nothing could be done officially until he had seen His Majesty, which he declined to do, and yet the treaty must be exchanged. There was, in his mind, a complete deadlock.

* See note at the end of the Narrative.

The answer recapitulated the circumstances under which the American Minister had accepted the invitation of the Commissioners at Shanghai to come to the capital, and quoted the Imperial rescript made known to him by Hangfuh confirming that invitation. Mr. Ward then proposed to deliver the President's letter to them, and afterwards to exchange the treaty. In their rejoinder, the same difficulty was involved in their minds as in the previous letter; for, as Mr. Ward would not see the Emperor, so neither would they receive the President's letter; and, this premise being granted, it would consequently be still more unsuitable for the treaty to be exchanged in the city itself. These difficulties, singular as they may appear to us, naturally grew out of the education and notions of these officers respecting national etiquette, and the dignity of their sovereign. It is quite as well, perhaps, that this whole discussion took place with the American Minister, who in his visit was left free on one important point, — for not being ordered by his Government to see the Emperor, he was not anxious about doing so.

A delay of thirty-six hours took place before answering this communication, and the reply was ready when Judge Sieh came in to learn the cause of the silence. The Chinese were now apprehensive that the President would be displeased at the non-reception of his Minister; and Sieh suggested that if Mr. Ward would express a wish for Kweiliang to receive the letter, it would be granted; or if he would say where, out of the metropolis, he preferred the treaty to be exchanged, his proposal would be considered. Neither of these propositions was attended to, but there was no objection to add to the reply, then ready to be sent, a disclaimer of want of respect to his Majesty, and the expression of sincere regret that the Minister had found himself unable to comply with the ceremonies of an audience at his Court; for if he should fail of rendering him every mark of respect, not wholly inconsistent with the laws and usages of his own country, he would be rebuked by the President. This filled the record to their satisfaction. The next day, a copy of the Imperial rescript, embodying the final decision of the Government, was furnished.

It gave a summary of the proceedings at Taku at the time of the battle; and though it contained two or three important errors, it proved that the authorities on the coast had endeavored to open communications with the Allied Plenipotentiaries. It then pro-

ceeded:—"At this juncture, the American Envoy, John E. Ward, in compliance with his engagements with Kweiliang, came to Pehtáng in his ship, requesting that he might go to Peking, as he was the bearer of a letter from the President of the United States. Our permission was accordingly given for him to bring the letter up to the Capital, where he arrived with it. This day, the Ministers Kweiliang and Hwashana have handed up the various dispatches received from him, for Our examination, and from them it is clearly to be seen that his sentiments are exceedingly respectful, and indicative of the utmost sincerity and truthfulness.

"Let the letter which the American Envoy has brought be taken, and let Kweiliang and Hwashana be specially appointed to receive it for transmission to Ourself. In regard to the exchange of the treaty, it would be proper indeed to return to Shanghai to do it, but when We reflect that the Envoy has already come over the seas for this purpose, we now specially direct that the Great Seal be affixed to the Treaty, and it be delivered to Hangfuh, the Governor-general, and let him exchange the ratifications with the American Minister at Pehtáng. After this has been done let lasting friendship and commerce continue between the two nations. This will show forth our great regard and kindness to people from afar, and clearly exhibit the deep respect we entertain for truth and justice. This from the Emperor."

In their note inclosing the above, the Commissioners appointed the hour for receiving the President's letter, and informed Mr. Ward that his escort would be ready on the 11th, as had been previously agreed. They then happily observe, "Hereafter we will cherish the same feelings of respectful regard towards the President which you have now made known towards our own Emperor; and let these sentiments be the expression of the friendly relations which shall hereafter exist between our respective nations."

Matters were now drawing to a conclusion, and on Wednesday the Letter was received by Kweiliang at his former hall. He took the box as it was brought in, lifting it to his head as he delivered it to an attendant to place on the table. He then informed Mr. Ward that the functions of himself and Hwashana as plenipotentiaries ceased with that interview, and they would soon render back their seal to his Majesty. It is impossible not to feel a high degree of respect for Kweiliang, not alone from his long

and honorable services, and regard for his station as the first statesman in the Empire, but from his venerable age and the unaffected kindness of his demeanor. Hwashana has less urbanity, but his practical sense and candor entitle him to a high position. Chosen doubtless for their well known ability, these two men were appointed to negotiate at a critical period in the history of their country; and while we are able to judge the value of their concessions, we are not so able to estimate the obstacles they may have had to overcome in reaching them; and they are still less in a good position fully to appreciate all their results. We are probably more disposed to be strict in our judgment of their errors and failings, than to consider the misconceptions and disadvantages under which they have been nurtured, and the ignorance they are in of their own true interests.

Preparations were made for departure the next morning. Two convenient mule litters were furnished for Dr. Sandford and Mr. Aitchison, who were too ill to ride in carriages. Letters were received from the Russian Minister, with a file of the *Times* newspaper to the 19th of May, but no personal intercourse took place with any member of that Legation. While the Embassy was in Peking, the Chinese officials left its members to the quiet observance of the Sabbath, on which days public services were conducted by chaplain Wood.

A few tradesmen brought their wares at various times for inspection. The state of currency at the capital is deplorably bad, and much of the traffic is carried on with paper money. The Mexican dollar is almost unknown, but was reckoned at 58 candareens of sycee and exchanged for 740 copper cash; a bank-bill of 1000 cash is worth only 170 of copper, and fifteen such bills are exchanged for a tael of silver. The supply of copper and silver is inadequate even for the wants of the city, and nothing indicates a prospect of improvement in trade, or increase in the metallic currency. The Government liberally supplied us during the whole journey, and neither for boats, servants or provisions, would they accept any recompence. The weather was charming, the thermometer seldom rising to 88° at noon; and the days were agreeably varied by showers and sunshine.

We arrived at Tung-chau about sunset on the 11th, having stopped on the road three times for the sake of the invalids. The channel of the Pei-ho had fallen a foot during the fortnight.

We found that its descent has difficulties as well as the ascent; and the boatmen showed their skill in avoiding the shallows, as the current swept them on from one side to the other in its tortuous course. The depth seldom reached seven feet, and was frequently under three; the steep banks are constantly falling in on one side and increasing on the other, but absorption by the porous soil gradually diminishes the volume of water flowing out to sea and reduces the capabilities of the stream. This river is more than a thousand miles in length, and with its affluents drains the greater part of the province of Chihli; but owing to the nature of the soil, and the contingencies of freshes and droughts, the navigation, during the seven or eight months it is free from ice, is not altogether to be depended on. Since the traffic by the Grand Canal has been obstructed, the shipping on its waters has diminished.

On reaching Peh-tsáng, it was found that our kindhearted escort had sent forward the litters from Tung-chau, so that the invalids experienced no detention. Dr. Sandford had improved while in the boats, and he finally reached the frigate stronger than when he left Peking; but Mr. Aitchison was now weaker. He was placed in his litter with the faint hope that he would survive to reach the ship, but he died a few hours after leaving the boat. His body was carried to Pehtáng, and buried at the anchorage. As a Chinese scholar his attainments were remarkably good, and his uniform kindness and christian virtues had endeared him to a large circle of acquaintances during the five years of his residence in China.

The roads beyond Peh-tsáng were now dry and smooth, and the traveling in carriages agreeable. A violent storm of rain that night flooded them, and the contrast next day was dismal; but the cortege was able to reach Pehtáng on the 16th about 2 P.M., in time for the previous appointment with the Governor-general and Treasurer. They were surrounded by a large retinue of officials, and had lined the streets with files of spearmen and archers to receive Mr. Ward. Waiving all ceremony and preparation, they proposed to exchange the treaty before he went on board the *Toeywan*, then lying in the river. This was accordingly done, and certificates of the exchange passed between the respective parties that same evening.

After the exchange, Hangfuh proposed to deliver one of the two prisoners taken from the English, and brought him forward

for that purpose. The man, named John Powers, had declared himself to be an American, but now said that he was a Canadian by birth; and it required considerable explanation to make the Governor-general understand how he was not an American citizen, though he was born in territory adjoining the United States, and not in England. The Chinese were also informed that he would not be demanded of them even if he had been. They were in some perplexity when they ascertained that he was an English subject, but after hearing all the points of the case, concluded to deliver him to Mr. Ward entirely on the ground of humanity, as he had consented to receive him only on those terms. This man and his fellow-prisoner had been well treated by the Chinese, but were both ill at this time.

The three officers constituting the escort, Tsunghau, Chang, and Li, came on board in the evening to take leave of the Minister. The first had won the good opinions of all from the day we started, by his gentlemanly bearing and unremitted efforts to render the journey agreeable. He has since been promoted to the superintendency of the gabelle in Chihli, and bids fair to rise to eminent posts.

The next day the steamer returned to the outer anchorage, four weeks after her passengers had landed at Pehtáng. Her arrival was hailed by Commodore Tattnall and his officers, as a relief to the monotony of their anchorage, and on the evening of the 18th the *Powhatan* sailed for Shanghai.

In this brief narrative, two objects have been kept in view. One has been to describe the reception and proceedings of the American Embassy in its journey to the Chinese capital; the other, to exhibit, more particularly than would have been necessary had the Embassador seen the Emperor, the discussions held with the Commissioners upon the ceremony required at the Chinese Court so as to show the views which it now entertains. Many notices of incidental interest respecting the people and country have been omitted, but the circumstances of the visit were peculiar, and the opportunities scanty for inquiring into what had not been already more satisfactorily investigated, by previous visitors to Peking.

The reception of the Embassy was courteous, rather than cordial or open; while all the antecedents of its visit might, in the minds of some persons, have justified the Chinese Government in

granting it no more than a mere entry to its capital for specified purposes in a manner previously stipulated. After starting on his mission, the Minister committed himself entirely to the authorities, and they treated him in a manner to prove that some degree of confidence may be placed in them, and that they designed to carry out that part of the treaty of Tientsin which related to the visit to their capital.

While I am ready to concede that many of the objectionable points in Chinese policy will be maintained by the rulers until a stronger power adds force to arguments drawn from reason and humanity to induce them to alter their proceedings, there are, I think, others which are better left to the gradual advance of knowledge and intercourse between foreigners and natives. To have this government upheld by the people, its authority must be consonant to their views, and as these change its policy will correspond; but to force the government to act against its supposed best interests will surely produce reaction. The treaties of Tientsin were all distasteful to national pride, and jeoparded, in the opinion of many loyal subjects, the vital interests of the empire. But with a better understanding the fears of all classes might reasonably be expected to subside, and even give place to co-operation.

At present Christendom stands before paganism, in this its last stronghold, in a doubtful position. Ignorance adds untold power to fear in the efforts the latter is making to resist the advancing tide, and we should be careful not to strengthen the worse side. The interests of humanity are not always strong enough to bear up against those of ambition, commerce, or conquest; but in this part of the world, at least, the arguments in favor of a peaceful progress of all the best interests of both natives and foreigners coincide. What seems to be most wanting just now is a better acquaintance with each other's motives, plans, and condition, especially among the influential classes of the empire, who if they could believe that their own authority was not endangered would probably be less indisposed to resist changes.

NOTE REFERRED TO ON PAGE 24.

The following extract from Pauthier's *Histoire des Relations Politiques de la Chine*, CHAP. X. *pp.* 209–234, furnishes many historical notices of this ceremonial, and will illustrate our discussion. The work was received here in July last.

This question of ceremonial has obtained a certain degree of importance in the political and diplomatic relations of Western nations, but never, so far as I am aware, has reached the forms or the importance with which it has been invested in the East, during more than three thousand years, in that most ancient monarchy where the traditions of the old world are still preserved.

It is not in these times that the endless conflict between the European and Asiatic mind has begun. It had already arisen in the days of Darius, the king of Persia; for according to Valerius Maximus, the Athenians condemned Timagoras to death for having saluted that monarch in the Persian manner, in the belief that their city had been humbled by this slavish act of one of its citizens, and that was one of the greatest of crimes. This instance is not the only one furnished by Grecian annals. Conon, another Athenian, doubtless remembering the example of Timagoras, refused to salute Artaxerxes Mnemon, to whom he had been sent on public affairs by his fellow-citizens, in the Persian, that is, the Chinese manner. The relation of Nepos might almost be deemed to recount an occurrence at the court of Peking:—

"Conon, having been sent to Artaxerxes by Pharnabazes to accuse Tissaphernes, on his arrival addressed himself, according to the Persian usage, at first to the Chiliarch, then named Tithrausten, who held the second rank in the empire; to him he made known his desire to have an interview with the king, for no one could be permitted to see him without this formality. This minister replied, 'There is no alternative, and you had better reflect maturely whether you will speak personally to the king, or make known to him in writing what you wish to say, for you must salute him by prostrating yourself before him when you come into his presence. If this be too serious a thing, I see no other way than for you to write out what you wish him to know.' Conon answered him, 'I see nothing very serious in this manner of doing honor to the king, so far as I am personally concerned; but I fear it will be a reproach to my country, if, when I am sent as an envoy by a state which is used to commanding others, I conduct myself after the usages of foreign nations rather than my own.' It was on this account, therefore, that Conon sent the king in writing what he wished to say in person."

Previous to Conon, according to Plutarch, Themistocles had less scruple or more policy. Themistocles, seeing himself in trouble, addressed himself first to Artabanes the Chiliarch, stating that he was a Greek by birth, and desired to explain to the king some very important matters of great interest to him. "Stranger," said Artabanes, "the laws of men are not everywhere the same, that which is agreeable to some is not so to others, but it is good for all to respect and maintain the laws of their own country. You Greeks, for instance, esteem liberty and equality above everything else. We, among a great number of good laws which we have, possess one more excellent in our eyes than all the rest, that which requires us to honor the king, and to adore in him the image of God who preserves all things. If then you can accommodate yourself

to our usages and worship him, you can, as we do, see and confer with him; but if you have other notions, you can speak to him only by intermediate agency, for the custom of Persia demands of every one who asks an audience of the king that he worship him."

"Artabanes," answered Themistocles, "I am here to add to the glory and power of the king; I will obey your law, since such is the will of God who has raised the Persian empire to such a grandeur; I wish even that your master may receive the adorations of increasing multitudes. This is no obstacle to the desire I have to see him." "But," rejoined Artabanes, "who shall I tell him you are? for you seem to me to be no ordinary man." "As to that," said Themistocles, "nobody, Artabanes; I shall explain it before His Majesty."

When he had an audience, he adored him by prostrating his head to the ground, and kept silence until the interpreter was told to ask his name. He then replied, "Great king, I am the Athenian Themistocles, who, banished and persecuted by the Greeks, has come to seek an asylum with you." Artaxerxes, though filled with admiration at his greatness of soul and courage, made no reply to him at this first audience; but, with his friends, felicitated himself upon this event as one of the happiest which could have happened to him, and prayed the god Arimanes always to put such thoughts into the minds of his enemies and lead them to banish their great men. He made sacrifices to the gods, followed by a great festival; he was so joyful that he was heard crying in his sleep three times, "I am Themistocles the Athenian!"

Nepos, in his life of this hero, briefly refers to the same incident. He simply relates that the conqueror of Salamis wrote to Artaxerxes to say, that, banished from Greece, he had come to ask an asylum and his friendship; for the historian doubtless thought it would tarnish the glory of his hero to make it known that he had prostrated himself before a foreign king. Although many Greeks had gone to the Persian court, very few of them, so say the historians, would submit to the ceremonial practiced by Themistocles and Timagoras, both of them Athenians. The conduct of those two Spartans mentioned by Herodotus, who having been condemned to die for the safety of their country, and had come into the presence of Xerxes to expiate the murder at Sparta of the two heralds sent by Darius, was very different. "Having been admitted on their arrival at Susa," says Herodotus, "into the presence of the king, the halberdiers wished to force them to prostrate themselves and adore him; but they resisted, saying that they had never done so, and never knocked their head against the ground; that it was not their custom to worship a man, and that they had not come there to practice any such ceremony." They then addressed themselves to Xerxes himself, "O king of the Medes! the Lacedæmonians have sent us here merely to expiate by our deaths those of the heralds who were killed at Sparta." Xerxes, who had a generous soul, told them that he was not going to imitate the Lacedæmonians, who, in destroying his heralds had violated one of the most sacred laws of mankind; that he would not even reproach them with it, for that if he should put them to death, he would indirectly justify the crime of the Spartans.

The ceremonial of the ancient Median court, which Alexander wished to adopt after the conquest of Persia, was the same as that of the court of Peking; and a story is told by Plutarch in his life of Alexander, that Cassander, on seeing some barbarians, who had come to the court of the son of Philip, adore him, burst out laughing; for, reared in the usages of Greece, he had never seen anything of the kind; but Alexander was so irritated, that taking him by the hair he struck his head against the wall.

According to Valerius Maximus, Quintus Curtius, and many other ancient writers, the salutation, or rather the royal adoration, consisted in prostrating one's self to the ground; and Seneca calls it Persian servitude. Aristotle places among the things which they honor, sacrifices, praises in verse or prose, rewards, tombs, support at the public expense, certain foreign usages, as those of prostration, extasy, &c. Valerius Maximus relates that the mother of Darius saluted Hephæstion, and adored him in the Persian manner in the place of Alexander. Tigranes, king of Armenia, says Plutarch, wished to prostrate

himself barely before Pompey and embrace his knees, but Pompey prevented him. This form of salutation was in use elsewhere than at the Persian court. According to Trebellius Pollio, Zenobia was saluted and adored in the Persian manner. Livy and Polybius agree that a like usage existed among the Carthaginians; for the commissioners sent from that city to Tunis where the Roman army then was, did not confine themselves in the interview, as the Roman envoys did, to libations to the gods after adoring Terra, as is usual among men, but servilely prostrated themselves at the feet of those who formed part of the council and kissed them.

Many ancient historians, as Xenophon and Arrian, have attributed to Cyrus the introduction of this mode of saluting the king. The first says, "As soon as they saw Cyrus, every one fell down and adored him, whether the order had been given beforehand by some one there present, who wished to give the first instance of this mode of testifying respect to him; or whether the spectators were all struck with admiration at the sight of him. This is certain, that before that time no Persian had ever prostrated himself so before him." We read however, that Nebuchadnezzar, not many years before, fell down on his face before Daniel, and worshiped him; and the usage of thus adoring the king was likewise known in Egypt, as some of the drawings in that country testify, so that the practice was not unknown in countries of which the Persians had knowledge.

In the fine discourse which Arrian makes Callisthenes hold with Alexander, he says:—"Reflect now, if, when you return to Greece you try to force this humiliating salutation upon the Greek people, the freest in the world; or if leaving out the Greeks, you try to fasten the opprobrium on the Macedonians alone.....If we go back to Cyrus, son of Cambyses, we shall find that he was the first among mankind to get himself saluted by prostration on the earth, and thence this humiliation extended to the Medes and Persians: do not forget, however, that the Scythians, those poor but free men, gave a good lesson to this same Cyrus in the person of Darius; the Athenians and Spartans in the person of Xerxes; Clearchus and Xenophon with only 10,000 men, in that of Artaxerxes; and lastly, in the person of this same Darius, before that Alexander wished to be himself adored."

Perhaps these excursions into Greek antiquity are rather long, but there one breathes a pure air, and the dignity of man seems there to find its highest expression. The Greek world is, in most of its relations, the opposite of the Asiatic; but that world is now little more than a *souvenir*.

It was doubtless, after bringing all Media and Babylon under his sway, that Cyrus, and later still Alexander, inflated with the pride of conquest and seduced by those forms of society, took these adulative rites. It was then that the Achemenian kings of Persia took the titles of *Bagadausta*, or Friend of God; *Bagacithra*, or Scion of God; *Bagapana*, Favorite of God; the word *maga* or *baga*, and later *bog*, *beg*, and *bogdoi*, signifies God in the Arian languages spoken at the Persian court. The Grand Dukes of Russia have called the Emperor of China, *Bogdoi-khan* or Divine Sovereign. We find similar qualifications given to the kings of Egypt; *Amon-mai*, beloved of Ammon; *Phta-mai*, beloved of Phta; *Amosis*, Oohmos, or-Ahmos, child of the Moon; *Thoutmes*, born of Thot; *Amnemos*, born of Ammon, the title which Alexander affected after his conquest of Egypt, when he went to the temple of Jupiter Ammon to receive the divine baptism.

The inscriptions discovered in the Babylonian and Persepolitan ruins confirm the relations of the ancient historians respecting the pretensions of the Persian kings. One instance found at Bisoutoun, B.C. 500, reads: "I am Darius, the sovereign, the king of kings, the king of the Persians, the king of the provinces of Media, Susiana, Babylon, Assyria, Arabia, Egypt, Lydia, Armenia, Cappadocia, Parthia, Drangiana, Bactria, Sogdiana, Sacia, Arachosia," &c. The present kings of Persia call themselves among other names, *Shah-en-shah*, king of kings.

The sovereigns of China have never taken any other title than *Tien-tsz*, or Son of Heaven (except the style of their reign); this is very fine, it is true, but it is

a term which devolves much on the man who resolves to take it. This ceremony, of which we have given a short historical notice as it existed among the ancients, does not seem to have been of Chinese origin; at least it is not mentioned in the history and ancient books of the country as far back as Confucius in the fifth century before Christ. This great philosopher, who has made China a nation unique among the nations, neither practiced nor recommended it. We do not meet it in the Ritual of the Chau dynasty (B. C. 1134-202), where three reverences with the hand towards the earth, or raised to the forehead above the head, are described as practiced instead of the modern *sán-kwei kiú-kaù*. The Master of Ceremonies then did not know such a ceremony among his minute and complicated ritual, which he taught the king himself. It appears that this new rite, which bears all the traits of a theocratic ceremonial, preserved even in Europe, was introduced by the famous Tsin Chí Hwangtí (who reduced the feudal states of China to a centralized monarchy, B. C. 220-206), and whose object in destroying all the monuments which existed at that time was to entirely recreate the civilization of China. As he wished to introduce many other usages of western Asiatic nations into China, this Assyrian-Median ceremony may well have formed a part of them. However this may have been, the practice of this rite was soon thoroughly incorporated into the practices of the Chinese court, as a few extracts will show.

"Towards A. D. 713," says Remusat, "some embassadors came from the Calif Waled to offer tribute to the Emperor Hiuentsung. They asked to be excused from the prostrations at the audience they sought, and were in consequence tried before a court, which declared in its sentence, that they were worthy of death for having committed an unpardonable crime against the custom, but the Emperor graciously remitted the sentence. The caliph then sent new embassadors, who protested that in their country they prostrated themselves only before God, and never before kings. They were severely reprimanded for it, whereupon they prostrated themselves. In 798, Haroun al Raschid sent three embassadors to the Emperor of China; they all performed the ceremony, and the prime minister loaded them with presents. It must be remembered that the Chinese well knew the great power of the Arabs at this time, and had had disputes with them in Thibet and Samarkand, and the Emperor Taitsung had in his pay a corps of Arab auxiliaries, which had assisted in retaking his two capitals from rebels."

P. Gaubil refers to this last incident in his abridged History of the Tang Dynasty. "In 798 the Calif Haroun sent three embassadors to the Emperor; when saluting him they performed the ceremony of kneeling and knocking the head on the ground. The first envoys whom the Calif sent to China made great objection to perform this ceremony. Chinese history relates that the Mohammedans declared they never kneeled except when they worshiped God; however, being instructed on the point, they no longer felt any scruple and performed it. It is from this that the native historian in noticing this embassy, remarks that the Chinese ceremonial was performed by the Mohammedan embassadors when saluting the Emperor."

This is the same Haroun al Raschid, who, three years after sent embassadors to the Emperor Ti-tsung, and also to the Emperor of the West at Pavia, where he was received with presents. History does not inform us whether the Arab embassador at Pavia prostrated himself before Charlemagne; then there were only three great empires in the world, that of Charlemagne, that of the Califs, and the third of China.

We see from this glance what importance has been attached to this question of ceremony during the last three thousand years. We will close it by referring to the opinion of a man whose authority is equal to that of any other in ancient or modern times. "I learned afterwards from the Emperor," says O'Meara, "that Lord Amherst had been sent as embassador to China from Great Britain. He remarked that he thought the English ministers had made a mistake in not requiring him to submit to the usages of the court to which he was sent, or otherwise that they should not have sent him there at all. A man who goes to a country ought to conform himself to the received customs of that country,

and it would have been no degradation on the part of Lord Amherst to have gone through, before the Emperor of China, with the ceremonies practiced by the first officers in the empire. If I should send an embassador to that court, I would order him to ascertain, from the highest dignitaries, what ceremonies were practiced before the Emperor, and conform to them, if demanded of him, but do nothing in addition. Perhaps they have lost the friendship of this nation, and great commercial advantages by this childishness."

This last word *(enfantillage)* is characteristic in the mouth of Napoleon, who knew the value of court ceremony. Themistocles, whose name he had evoked in a memorable circumstance, had judged likewise at the court of Artaxerxes. The question will erelong be again brought up, since, in the treaties of Tientsin, the western Powers have stipulated that the court of Peking shall receive their embassadors. We shall see then what is their policy in the matter. We know what England, Holland, Portugal, and Russia have heretofore done in regard to it. France has not yet had occasion to manifest her policy. However, the writer knows what the government of Louis Philippe intended in 1844 when it sent a minister plenipotentiary to China to negotiate a treaty of commerce. The following is the incident. Towards the latter part of 1843, he published in the Revue de l'Orient an article, entitled *Documents officiels chinois sur les ambassades étrangères envoyées près de l'empereur de la Chine.* It drew attention. M. de Lagrené, then appointed plenipotentiary, did him the honor to ask him by one of his attachés to call on him, for the purpose of inquiring if he wished to go with him to China. During the interview, in which M. de Lagrené was pleased to speak very highly of the publications of the writer, the latter inquired if the mission was going to Peking, and not to Canton alone, for then he would go with pleasure. The minister replied, that he was not going to Peking for this reason; that the article published in the Revue de l'Orient, describing the ceremonial observed at the Chinese court had been read to the ministry, and that after deliberation it had decided that the embassador of the king of the French should not submit to this ceremonial. M. de Lagrené remarked that as far as he was alone concerned, he saw no objection to doing it, for a minister or an embassador ought to comply with the usages of the court to which he was accredited; but that at any rate he should observe his instructions.

In the actual state of things, it would perhaps be the best plan for the powers which have signed the treaties of Tientsin to understand what course they will follow, and agree upon the instructions they will give their resident ministers at Peking upon this point. It is rather doubtful whether the President of the Board of Rites will make any concession in respect to ceremony, and it is certain he will not show as much strictness as the ministers of Hiuentsung did to the envoys of the Calif Haroun; but it is equally certain that he will make the least possible concession to European ideas, for he knows that it is precisely these usages, reputed inviolable by the Chinese, which have now for three thousand years, maintained this active and restless people under control, and made them the singular state they now are.

Europe, even at this date, has only a poor and even incorrect idea of China. She has scarcely fully appreciated her usages, seen as it were from afar. She would be surprised if she knew the body of ritual laws which regulate all the acts of social life, from that of the Emperor to that of the lowest of his officers; for the former, though regarded in Europe as an absolute monarch, has less real personal power than the most constitutional of our sovereigns. He is under these ritual laws. He himself performs this rite on many occasions, as when he sacrifices to Heaven or to Earth, when he worships in the temple to Shin-nung, to the goddess of Silkworms, to the highest Sages, of whom Confucius is first, to the Spirit of Heaven, Earth, and the North Star. On these occasions he makes the three kneelings and nine knockings. He even does so before his mother on solemn occasions, as at her birthday.

On the other hand, his sons perform the same ceremony to him; though the empress makes nine reverences to him instead of the nine prostrations. All other princes of the blood, high officers, even feudatory kings when they receive investiture from the emperor, perform this obeisance.

It is hardly probable therefore that European governments will induce the Chinese government to change their usage, at least for a long time. If our advice was asked upon this question, we should say that it was impossible for European embassadors to submit to this ceremony, at least unless modified; and then that it would be better for each embassador to observe the etiquette of his own court, dressed in the habiliments that court requires. Each nation will then preserve its own traits. Chinese embassadors who may be sent to European courts, or to America, will there perform their own ritual. All disputes on the matter will thus be avoided.

Supplementary to the above, and in order to better understand the detail of an audience before the Emperor, a translation of the paragraphs given in the *Tá Tsing Hwui Tien*, or Collected Statutes of the Tá Tsing Empire, is here added from Sect. 395 in Book 130. M. Pauthier has furnished the ritual of an audience taken from the *Tá Tsing Tung Lí*, which is fuller in its particulars, but the *Hwui Tien* probably contains an account of all the ceremonies now required of foreign envoys.

Whenever an envoy with tribute arrives at the capital, he must first go to the office of the Board of Rites to present his letter of credence. A table must be previously prepared, and set in the middle of the principal hall to receive it. The marshal in charge of the embassy, clothed in his official robes, leads the envoy, followed by his suite, each of them dressed in their native court costumes, from their hotel to the office of the Board of Rites. They enter the corner gate on the left side, and remain standing below the stairs on the left. An Under-Secretary of this Board takes his place on the left of the table, and two masters of ceremonies stand near the pillars on the two sides, all dressed in their robes. The marshal first mounts the steps and takes his place west of the left hand pillar; two interpreters and two ushers then lead the principal envoy and his suite in their proper order up the steps, where they stand. All then kneel. The first envoy, respectfully holding the letter of credence, hands it to the marshal, and he in turn delivers it to the Under-Secretary, whose duty it is to place it properly upon the table in the hall. They retire to their stations. The envoy and his deputy perform the ceremony of three kneelings and nine knockings, rise, and are conducted out by the ushers, when the marshal goes with them and their suite out of the hall. The master of ceremonies takes charge of the letter of credence, and next day transmits it to the Privy Council. Should the Emperor's birthday, the winter solstice, or the new-year occur, on each of which His Majesty holds levees in the palace, the grand chamberlains and the marshal, with their subordinates, conduct the envoy and his retinue through the great South Gate into an antechamber, where they quietly wait till they are introduced through the Ching-tú Gate. His Majesty enters the palace of Supreme Harmony, and his courtiers perform their obeisance. The envoy and his suite are then conducted by the ushers to the west side of the portico in front of the palace, to the end of the line on that side. There they hear the order, "perform the three kneelings and nine knockings."

If it is not one of the above-mentioned days for a levee, a request is made through the Board of Rites that one be appointed, and when the time has come to be admitted into the Presence, the minister from the Board of Rites, arrayed in his court embroidery, leads the envoy dressed in his national costume, with the interpreters in uniform, to the outer door of the palace, where they remain a while. His Majesty, arrayed in the customary dress of the palace, enters the side hall, where the high dignitaries of the palace, the household guards and their officers, and other attendants, are all placed in their usual posts. The minister of the Board of Rites conducts the envoy, followed by the interpreters, to the west side of the portico. Here they perform the great ceremony, when

they ascend the western steps, accompanied by an interpreter, and go to the door of the palace and kneel outside of it. His Majesty then makes gracious inquiries, which the Minister of Rites transmits to the interpreter to make known to the envoy. The latter returns his reply, the interpreter translates it, and the Minister of Rites communicates it to His Majesty for them. When the audience is over, they are conducted out.

If the Emperor wishes to treat the envoy with unusual honor, the several bodies of Manchu and Chinese dignitaries are assembled, each stationed in their appropriate ranks, and all arrayed in full embroidered robes. The Minister of Rites conducts the envoy to the portico before the palace, where the ceremony is performed; they then go up by the western stairs, and enter the right door of the palace, taking their place at the end of the line of officers on the right side. The interpreter stands just behind his superior. His Majesty graciously commands them to be seated. The officers of the palace and of the household guards, and the assembled body of the Manchu and Chinese grandees, with the Minister of Rites, all make an obeisance. Each being seated in his place, the envoy comes forward and makes his obeisance (knocks head once), after which he takes his seat. Tea is then handed. The cupbearer takes tea to His Majesty, and all make their obeisance; then the soldiers of the guard hand cups to all the officers present, to the envoy and his suite, each one bowing his head to the ground as he receives it. When this ceremony is over, all bow as at first. The Emperor then graciously makes kind inquiries of the envoy, which are transmitted as before described. The audience over, the Minister of Rites conducts the envoy out to the antechamber, where His Majesty's orders are received to invite him to a banquet. The marshal finally conducts him back to his hotel. The next morning at dawn he repairs to the Great South Gate of the palace, to return thanks for these favors. The President of the Banqueting Hall gives orders to the ushers to arrange every one in his place. The envoy is conducted up the portico of the palace, and stationed so as to face the northwest, when he performs the grand ceremony as required.